

Baby San

D.L. Thomas



**A PRIVATE
LOOK
At The
JAPANESE
OCCUPATION**

by
HUME

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

During World War II the *Panama Star Herald* labelled **Bill Hume** "the U. S. Navy's most talented serviceman," and *Yank*, the GI magazine, flashed pictures and stories of the Hume versatility. Then in September 1951 Bill Hume, a reservist, landed in Oppama, Japan, after being recalled to the Navy from a flourishing career as a free-lance artist, including some enlightening years as scenic technician for the famed actress, Maude Adams. Making a Japanese brush behave in American style, Bill Hume has depicted situations that have already had servicemen in Japan roaring with laughter. His cartoons have appeared on the bulletin boards of navy hangers, in *Stars & Stripes* (the popular "When We Get Back Home" series), and *The Oppaman*. Finally, after dozens of cartoons, "Babysan" blossomed forth to become a feature in the *Navy Times (Pacific)* and the most popular of all the Hume characters.

* * *

John Annarino, of the U. S. Navy, co-author with Bill Hume in writing the Babysan commentary, is a journalism graduate from St. Bonaventure University. Assigned to Japan in November 1951, where he launched and still edits *The Oppaman*, a Navy servicemen's weekly, Annarino became a frequent contributor to the *Pacific Stars & Stripes* and the *Navy Times (Pacific)*. He has also written the highly successful Far Eastern Navy Show, *Damn the Torpedoes*. Songs from the show are currently being used in the popular Japanese movie, *Yassa Mossa*.

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ベビサン

Babusan

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by
BILL HUME

with commentary
by
JOHN ANNARINO
and
BILL HUME



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*This book is dedicated
to all Americans
who have visited
the land of Fujisan*

*and who may have
learned from the Japanese
how to be occupied
while occupying.*



Introduction

In 1945, in the early days of the occupation of Japan, it was a common sight to see American servicemen giving candy to some baby boy or girl. Most of the Japanese kids were shy and this friendly gesture helped win the youngsters over to the side of the Americans.

As the years passed, those kids, naturally, grew up. The little boy grew up to be a boy-san and the little girl grew up to be—like Babysan.

By September, 1951, when Bill Hume arrived in Japan, having been recalled from the Naval Reserve to serve with Fleet Aircraft Service Squadron 120, the fascinating, fun-loving Japanese girls, influenced by American customs, were trying their best to become Westernized. From Hume's observation of such incongruous antics as Japanese jitterbugging, American as apple pie, yet oriental as a rice paddy, a new personality was born—Babysan. And from the brush of the talented sailor, Bill Hume, life fairly burst into the personality.

Created as a local pin-up to help boost the morale of the servicemen in Japan, the Babysan cartoons made their first bid for fame on the Navy flight hangar's bulletin board at Oppama. From the bulletin board to a weekly feature in the pages of the Far East edition of the *Navy Times*, Babysan scored an immediate hit. Her graceful lack of sophistication, her frank sayings—*"If I not here tomorrow, I out with other boy friend"*—made for surefire cartoon entertainment.

The many faceted personality of Babysan was not an imaginary product. Her name was a fiction but her existence was a fact. Among the sailors in the paint locker her escapades were recounted. In the offices there were stories of how she frowned on her officer boyfriend who continually brought her cartons of corn flakes as a token of his affec-

tion. In the barracks her boyfriends admitted to each other that she had caught them butterflying—romantically cheating. In clubs and on the streets she could be seen and appreciated. As she was transferred onto paper the servicemen could see their own girl friends' characteristics and their own amusing, true experiences. For apparently what happened to one man often happened to another as well.

Newly arrived servicemen got a pleasant and harmless taste of what might be in store for them. They even gained some knowledge of Japanese customs and language in an impressive and entertaining manner. But after all, Babysan was created purely for entertainment, in some way to mirror the exciting moments in an otherwise dull existence of the servicemen. As the members of the armed forces loved Babysan, so did Babysan love them.

A carefree and charming girl, Babysan never forgot the acts of kindness on the part of the American. She decided, in fact, to devote herself to the cause of the American serviceman in Japan. She would make his stay in the land of the cherry blossoms a pleasant one, and—well, the way she figured it—the more GI's the merrier. There wasn't much sense in restricting her charms to one.

The antics of the fun-loving Babysan, many of which are recorded on the following pages of this book, are fast becoming a delightful legend in the history of the GI dynasty in Japan—sometimes called the American Occupation.

To those who served with the American forces in Occupied Japan, this book will bring many a chuckle in recalling the happiness some little Babysan brought into their lives. To others this book will prove a fascinating account of the mutual problems of the Japanese and American peoples in their first chance to become truly acquainted since the days of Admiral Perry.

Babysan

Like the famed cherry blossoms come with the Japanese springtime, Babysan came with the Occupation—and it is hard to say which brings more color and charm to the small Far Eastern country. One is inclined, however, to stake his *yen* on Babysan; she is in bloom all year 'round.

Since her dazzling debut in 1945, Babysan has been a colorful charmer to the American servicemen in Japan. She came but she did not exit with the Occupation. That figures. Neither did her American admirers. She still may be seen on the busy Japanese streets, packing a personality that couples the sauciness of Scarlet O'Hara with the innocence of Little Orphan Annie. She has won the servicemen's affection and made their stay in the land of the rolling rickshaw a pleasant and unforgettable one.



"You think Japanese girls look like this?"

Babysan

The man who said, "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet" has obviously never seen Babysan in an American service club. To the strains of the "Japanese Rhumba," this young Japanese girl, with a sailor partner, jives and jitterbugs her way across the clubroom floor. Her slim body, tucked into skirt and sweater, arches to the rocking rhythm. Her comely oriental features slide into a fun loving laugh. She looks Japanese. She looks American. Nice, you think. Incongruous, you think. Sexy, you think. You don't need that next drink to understand that Babysan is a fascinating, delightful creature.

Of course, so is the girl back home. But Babysan is here!



"Y'know—she looks just like my girl back home!"

Babysan is the brightest but only one of the innovations to hit Japan since the end of World War II. As American servicemen continued to swarm into the country, the polite and pleasant Japanese people felt they must do something to bring themselves into closer harmony with their American guests. They sensed the need for changes in their unique way of life.

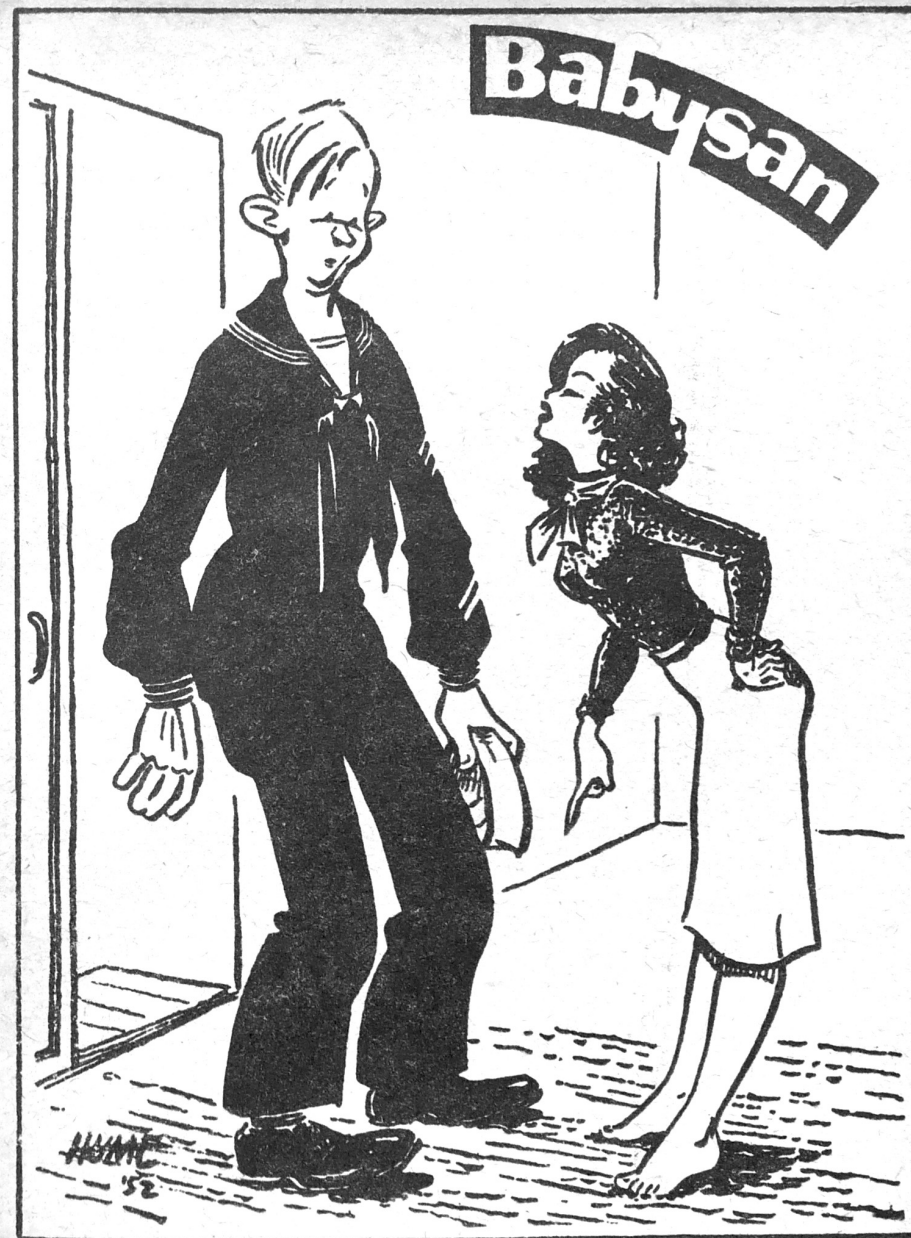
And change it did. Japan's business and social world spun crazily beneath an American welcome mat. *Sukiyaki* gave way to the hamburger. Milk shakes and *sake* vied as thirst quenchers. Skirts and sweaters rivaled *kimonos* and *obis* when it came to fashions. Saddle shoes stepped into competition with *geta*, standard Japanese footgear. The Japanese added new words like "okay" to such native sayings as *dai-jobu* and found that they mean the same.



"I think Occupation was *dai-jobu*."

Ordinarily Babysan is quiet, but alert. By observation she learns many facts about her American friend. She patiently tolerates many of the more irritating traits, but even her patience can give way to exasperation at times.

As the American blunders and bluffs his way through the unfamiliar maze of oriental custom he practically shouts his ignorance or lack of consideration for the Japanese way of life. In a thousand little ways Japan continues to become Americanized. It has not discarded the age-old customs—the removal of footgear on entering the house or the low bow upon meeting acquaintances—but it is piling new modes and manners onto the old.



"How long ago you come Japan?"

Babysan

Babysan is typical of the revamped, Americanized Japan. Even her name reveals the startling blend of the two countries. *San* may be assumed to mean mister, missus, master or miss. Babysan, then, can be translated literally to mean "Miss Baby." The American, seeing a strange girl on the street, can't just yell, "hey, baby." He is in Japan, where politeness is a necessity and not a luxury, so he deftly adds the title of respect. It speeds up introductions.

Babysan knows that in the states sometimes an infant is referred to as "baby," but she knows what her boyfriend means when he calls her Babysan. She's his "Baby Doll."



"You think Babysan look like a babysan?"

Babysan

Curiously enough, although her boyfriend insists on calling her Babysan, she may have many names. She has her family name—a name he may never learn. She has a given name that is pronounced with a *ko* at the end of it. She has several other names—all American—that she has picked out as to her own personal liking. Some of these may be intimate little pet names that some past boyfriend has bestowed upon her. Her Japanese girl friends may even call her by the American name she prefers at the moment. She may be Barbara, or Sally, or June.

The serviceman doesn't really care whether she is Emiko or Keiko, Jean or Linda. For him and his *yen* she is the one and only—Babysan.

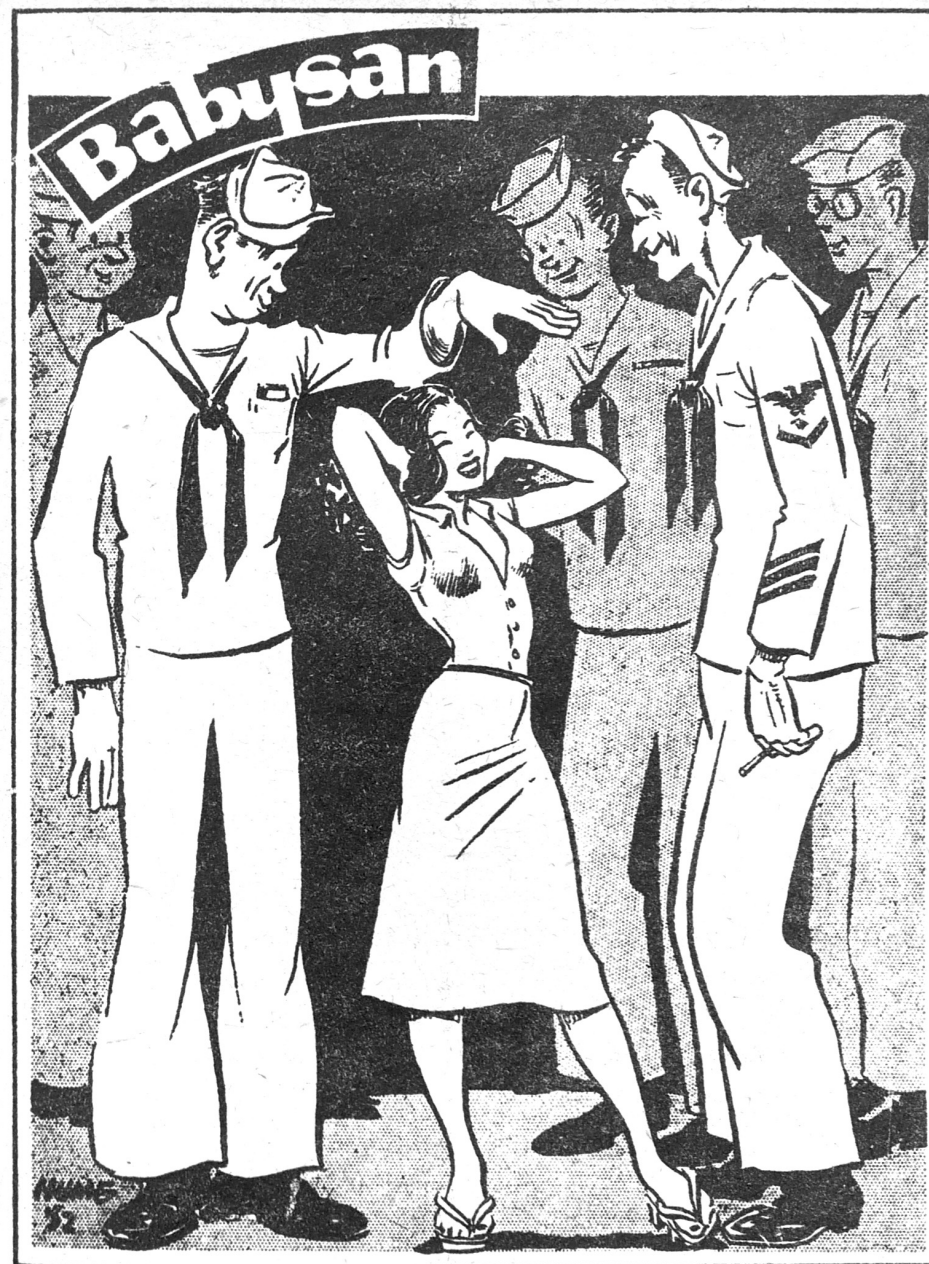


"Can I help if guys have a yen for me?"

BabySan

Sometimes in appearance she actually does seem to be a tiny, but not fragile, doll. At least, not the kind one would place upon the mantelpiece back home.

Her face is oval. Her cheekbones are high. Her nose is pug. Her mouth is pouty. Her lips are a blazing scarlet, playing up what she judges from American movies to be the fashionable standard. Her hair is long and dark and slung into a peek-a-boo hair-do. Compared to American girls, she is short. But who cares? She has a heart that seems twice as big as many of her American sisters, and your every wish is her command. Since she is both a sensitive and a practical creature, let us suggest that your wishes be reasonable.



"Maybe short, American—just right, Japanese!"

Babysan

With the shifting of service personnel she has had opportunities to win the affection of more than one soldier, sailor, or marine, and her knowledge of geography has been increased with greater rapidity than is possible by formal schooling. In turn she has done her best to acquaint her new friends with the customs and rich traditions of her own country. She is grateful for all the things she has learned and the interesting friends she has gained. She will not forget them—or their addresses.

Some of her friends seem to think they will make a better than favorable impression on Babysan if they offer to take her back stateside with them when they return. Babysan is always impressed with such an offer. Strangely enough, these well-meaning boyfriends usually get rotated or shipped out before they can arrange such a generous gesture on her behalf.



"When you take me to America—you take me to ALL the states, ne?"

Babysan

Babysan is terribly impressed by American movies, American customs, the American way of life. Unfortunately her friends have given her some warped ideas. But even though she is convinced that all American women have to carry pistols in their purses to protect themselves from gangsters, she wants to be very much like the screen sirens. She hopes this will please her "steady" boyfriend. She's trying her darndest to become westernized, more to American liking. If she sometimes overdoes this effort, it is very easy to forgive her. It merely shows that she is giving her all to please.



"You know what American girl tell me . . .?"

She may not go so far as to become a blonde but she knows that there are many ways to attract a man. She realizes that occidentals from Brooklyn and any point west often admire lush curves. In the Jane Russell department Babysan is slightly understocked. So are many Japanese girls. But there are some western ideas that can be used without adaption to enhance *chisai chichi*—*chisai* means small, and even small *chichi* are better than no *chichi* at all.

She tries a western innovation and she succeeds—a little awkwardly perhaps, but the jump is hurdled. A girl just doesn't step out of wooden, toe-revealing *geta* into soaring, high-heeled shoes without wobbling a little, and she doesn't shed a *kimono* for a skirt and a sweater without looking a little "artificial." But on Babysan, the boyfriend insists, even "falsies" look good.



"I went to the PX today!"

Babysan

Babysan is a good-time-Charlie with an oriental manner and a stateside personality. Her American counterpart is the "baby" of the chorus line who is showered with gift-wrapped affection from the bulb-eyed gentleman in the front row. She is the "baby" who keeps the pin-striped business-man chuckling and carefree at the annual convention.

There have been many long, loud and ribald discussions of the difference between girls who happen to live on different sides of an ocean. When you come right down to it there doesn't seem to be enough difference to make any difference.



"You speak. Japanese girls different from girls in states?"

The first sailor-English that Babysan learned must have been "never happen." Although she was never able to pronounce it correctly, it was a good answer for almost the first question any sailor would ask her. Then she discovered that variations of that phrase brought different results. Replacing "never" with "it" brought her more friends, regular *gozan*—meals—a comfortable place to live, and dresses that gave her "nice style."

In America jewels and furs may put the twinkle in a damsel's eye but in Japan there's nothing like a thing called *yen*. Not to be confused with the yearning kind of *yen*, this *yen* is the big paper Japanese money that doubles for the American green-back.



"Nevah hoppen—whoops—it hoppen!"

Babysan

Money is referred to as *okane*—and it is an “open sesame” to many of those Japanese sliding portals. Other inducements may fail miserably.

Now Babysan is not a gold-digger. She is—in her strange and unusual way—sincere. She brings the sunshine into her boyfriend's life and she expects, naturally enough, to be rewarded for her efforts. She likes to be remembered on her birthday and such special occasions, on each and every American holiday, and on the Japanese holidays, of which there is a seemingly endless list. But the day that pleases her most, and the one time when she must be remembered, is payday.



“Why you all time bring candy — why never bring *okane*?”

Babysan

Japanese currency and other assorted offerings swing to her like a burley queen swings to the bumpy strains of "Poor Butterfly." Despite the gifts showered upon her by the boyfriend, Babysan is not always influenced by them. Beneath her calm exterior she is an emotional creature. Even if he didn't bring well-filled packages as tokens of affection she would still love him just as much. This situation is known as "true love."

Of course she may have friends who also bring "presentos" and *yen*. But this is not a matter of love, for they are only "speak friends." Or shall we say—platonic?



"Why Babysan—I didn't know you loved me so much!"

Babysan's adopted manners and her new way of life give her a touch of individuality. She is not the tourist's idea of the Japanese girl and she is not exactly what the American serviceman expected. They had seen many misleading Hollywood versions of the "Madame Butterfly" type, and they had heard of the famous *geisha* — a word the American insists on mispronouncing. They undoubtedly visualized the colorful kimono, the hair piled and planted with combs, and the timid eye peeking from behind a fluttering fan. This sort of girl still inhabits Japan, of course, but she is not usually found clinging to a serviceman's arm. In GI circles, Babysan has edged her out of the scene.



"I like Japan—it's so colorful!"

Babysan

A pretty girl's physical charms won't go unnoticed by the Japanese but the refreshing frankness of many phases of their lives have placed less emphasis on revealed curves. From the bathhouses to the fields they are accustomed to an unashamed display of bare bodies. Sometimes a lack of privacy in crowded living quarters forces them to accept revealment as calmly as concealment.

Babysan has found that what is commonplace to her is a novelty to the sheltered American. It even provides him with considerable excitement. She often tries to help.

The boyfriend cannot help but display his amazement. Babysan, on the other hand, fails to understand what is so amazing.



"Why you all time look—you never see Japanese girl before?"

The life of a serviceman is always unpredictable. No matter how much he may come to like some place or some one—like Babysan—when his duty calls he must go.

When he leaves he is faithful enough to write her. His letters fascinate her. Of course she hasn't learned to read more than a few words of English, and he hasn't bothered to learn to write in *kata-kana*, the simplest of the three most-used Japanese writing forms. But she finds a way to read his words of love.

Her maneuvers are not exactly orthodox, and perhaps not exactly tactful, but they get results. The new boyfriend may be reluctant, but he always helps. He also learns many things he never suspected before.



"Today I have letter from before boy friend—you read to me—ne?"

There are still many sailors who glory in the exquisite perfection of their skin decorations. The Navy may officially frown upon them, but not the truly salty swabbie. He thinks his portable masterpieces will impress Babysan with the brilliance of their coloring and the delicacy of their design. They're probably the finest work ever to come out of that little shop down the street from Hinode-cho station in Yokohama and he has *takusan*—many—of them.

If he is a little disappointed in her lack of appreciation of such things he will be glad for her to tell him that the Japanese have a custom of putting tattoos on criminals. Maybe then he will understand—and promptly dream up an exciting account of his gang days in Dubuque. She may even believe him.



"Takusan tattoo—maybe you one time gang boy?"

She speaks an international language—broken American and chopped Japanese. She learns the expressions of the American servicemen in the Far East as fast as a baby learns to cry for his bottle. She often bewilders her new boyfriend by her command of the English language.

The boyfriend can't help but believe at times that there is another American love in her life, someone who teaches her a Yankee word or two. Babysan assures him that such a thing could—to coin one of her favorite expressions—nevah happen.



"I not snow you—I learn English from book."

Ordinarily Babysan is well informed on the boyfriend's routine of duty and liberty. She expects him to be with her during his free time. The Navy often has different expectations, and in its own inimitable and unpredictable manner the U.S.N. can foul up any sailor's social life. Babysan knows that there is a "war on," and is quite forgiving of a respectable amount of absence on the part of her man. When it happens too often she is justified in wondering.

She can even believe that the boyfriend is stepping out on her—butterflying.



"You all time speak work, work. Sometimes I think you butterfly!"

Babysan

A nice way to spend a cool Japanese evening is to sprawl out on the *tatami*—the rice mat floor covering—and let Babysan hold “inspection” on your billfold. She is interested in how much money you have left until payday, of course, but she also dashes through all the slips of paper and lingers over the photographs. She studies the snapshots of your mother, your father, your little brother—that gorgeous brunette that is about your own age. Your mother, your father, your little brother, and you, are all—blondes!

Try as you may, it is difficult to convince Babysan that you are unattached.



“But Honey—she *IS* my sister!”

Babysan

If Babysan's affections should wander and the boyfriend should point an accusing finger at her, she explains that she doesn't butterfly; she merely seeks a change. As Heinz, she believes that variety is the spice of life.

Perhaps when he first met Babysan he neglected to point out that he frowned upon the fascinating, but often very irritating, custom. Then she would have assured him that she was completely true to him. For Babysan would not tell him even the tiniest untruth. Until later, when she had changed her mind about the whole matter.



"I never butterfly—just changee, changee!"

Like most Japanese, Babysan is fond of photography and pictures of her friends. Especially her boy friends. She sticks them in strange and unusual places, usually being very careful that only one is in view at a time. Making sure that the right one and the right time coincide can be quite confusing. Babysan endeavors to match her movements with the boyfriend's duty and off-duty hours. At times, however, the unexpected and unforeseen shake the strictest schedule.

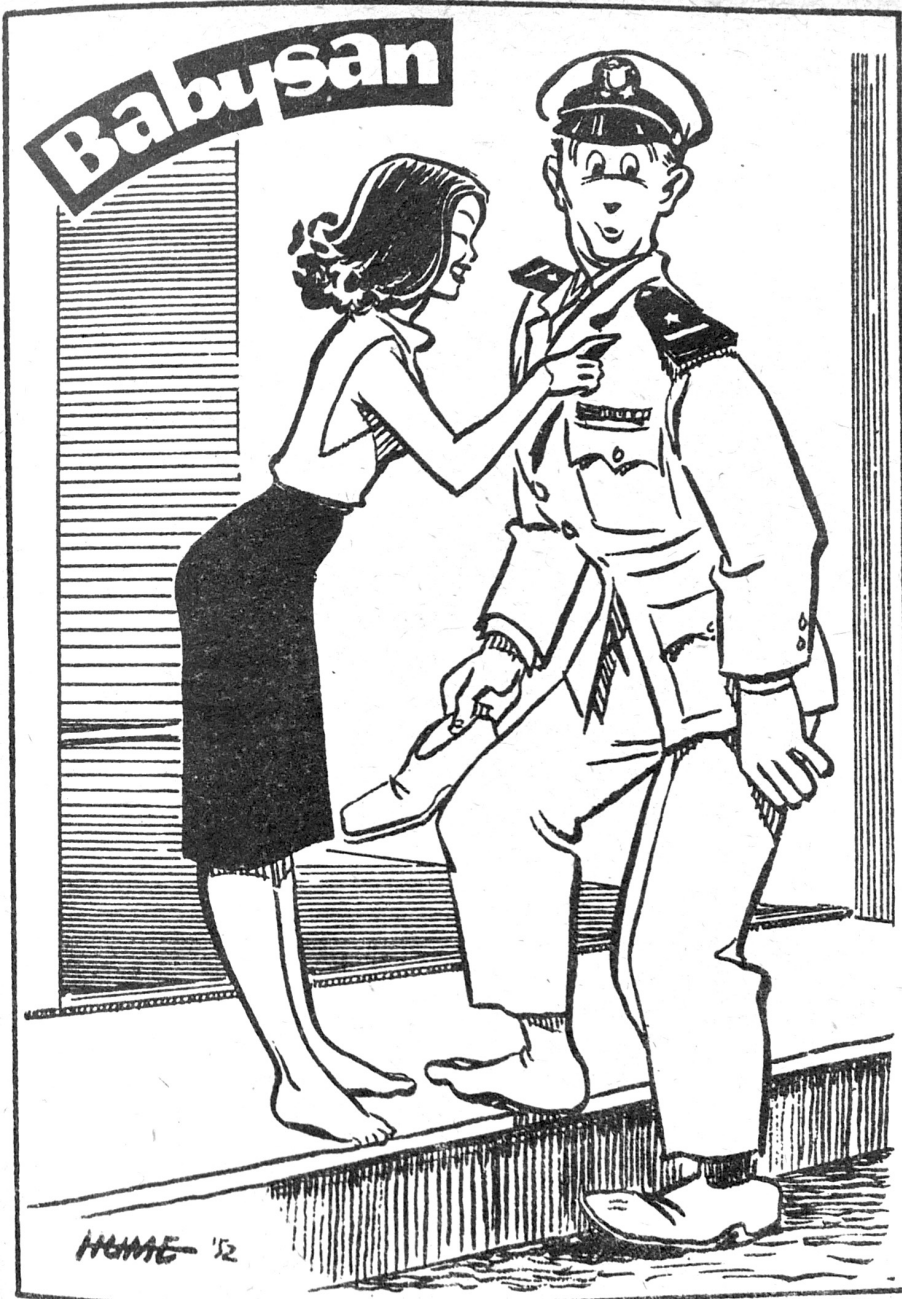


"Joe-san! I think you have duty tonight!"

Babysan

Babysan can be quite mischievous, and even unpredictable, in her attempts to flatter a man she is meeting for the first time. She is not necessarily impressed by the rank of gold braid for she knows that the lowly seaman is often more willing to give up his entire payday to make her happy. Still, it is a chance she must take and the flattery may work.

As Delilah dazzled Samson, as Juliet romanced Romeo, and as Allen befuddles Burns, so does Babysan affect the boyfriend.



"You an admiral—ne?"

Babysan

A brass band striking the salty strains of "Anchors Aweigh" in the middle of the Sahara Desert would be common-place compared to the observations of Babysan. She doesn't need a *soroban*—time-honored Japanese adding machine—to figure out the mistakes in the boyfriend's tax report. Perhaps he doesn't actually support her, but he is generous when there is something she needs. Like cigarettes, toothpaste, soap, Kleenex, hair oil, a blouse, a coat, a skirt, a dress, money for the rent, money for "eats," money for doctors and other incidentals.



"No dependent !!! ?"

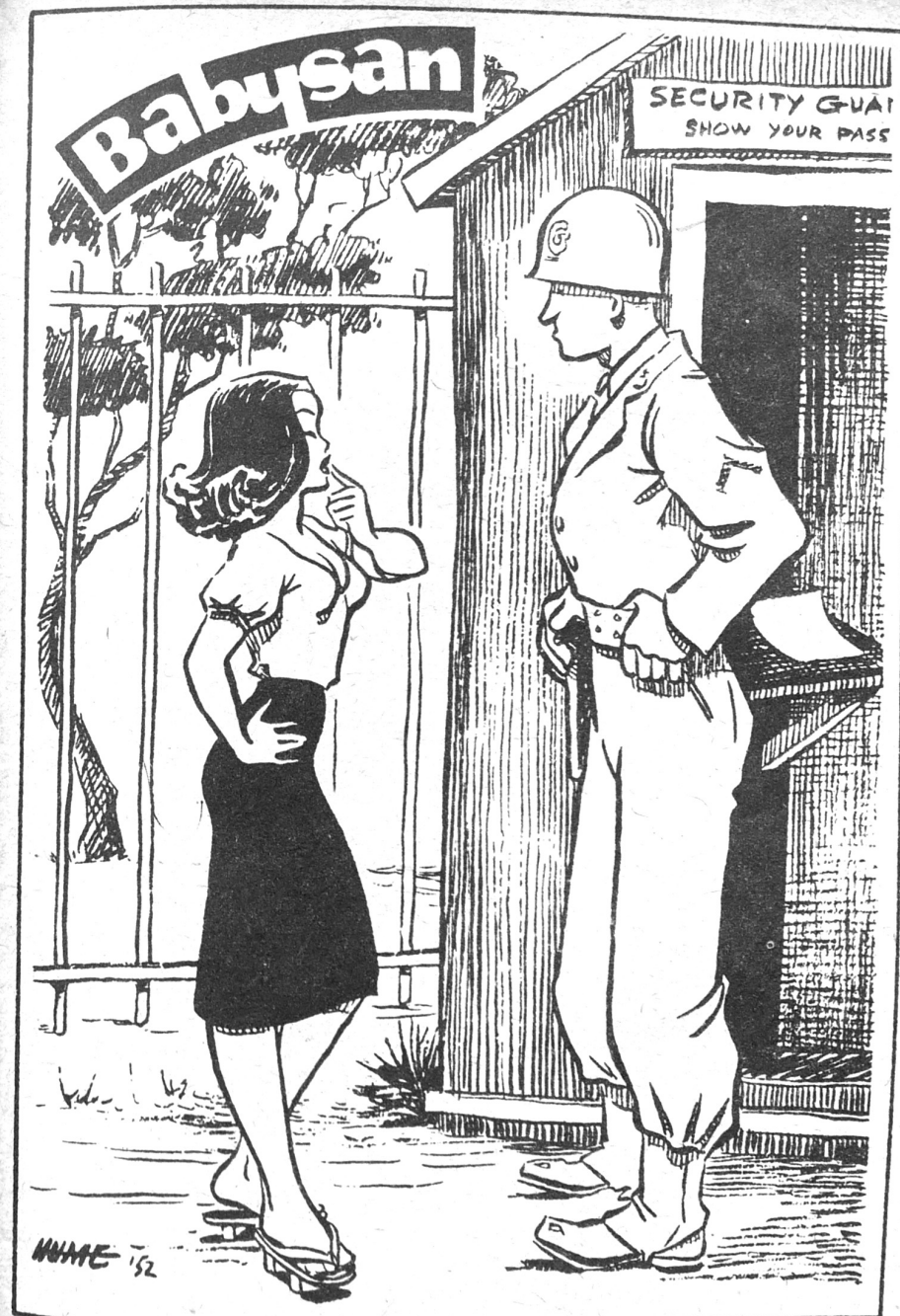
The *geisha* seem to be the only persons in Japan who still make use of the hand drawn rickshaw. Babysan is not a *geisha* and does not even ride in the bicycle rickshaws. Her American boyfriend may get a kick out of their silent smoothness, or the noisy jolting of the putt-putting three-wheel motorcycle type of taxi. Babysan prefers a taxi that comes from Ford or Chevrolet or even Austin. She isn't interested in the manufacturer or brand names, however. The car she has seen the most and knows the best is the rip-roaring, drab colored jeep. Jeeps ordinarily seem to be the exclusive property of military police and shore patrol, but actually they are used for other purposes, too. Babysan has on occasion sneaked a ride in a jeep, and her affection for them is boundless. To her, an automobile is a jeep.



"Nice jeep, ne?"

The problem of remembering names can work both ways. It may be tough for the American sailor to keep simple names like Yoshiko and Hideko filed away in the back of his white hat for future references, but it is equally difficult for Babysan to remember rhymeless and reasonless American names.

Often she has occasion to journey to the gate at the naval base to either meet the boyfriend or inquire about him. The gate guard is usually willing to help. It's his job. But a lack of information can make his job doubly difficult. Neither he nor Babysan can be blamed if connections cannot be made between the quiet, concerned little Japanese charmer and her almost unknown boy friend.

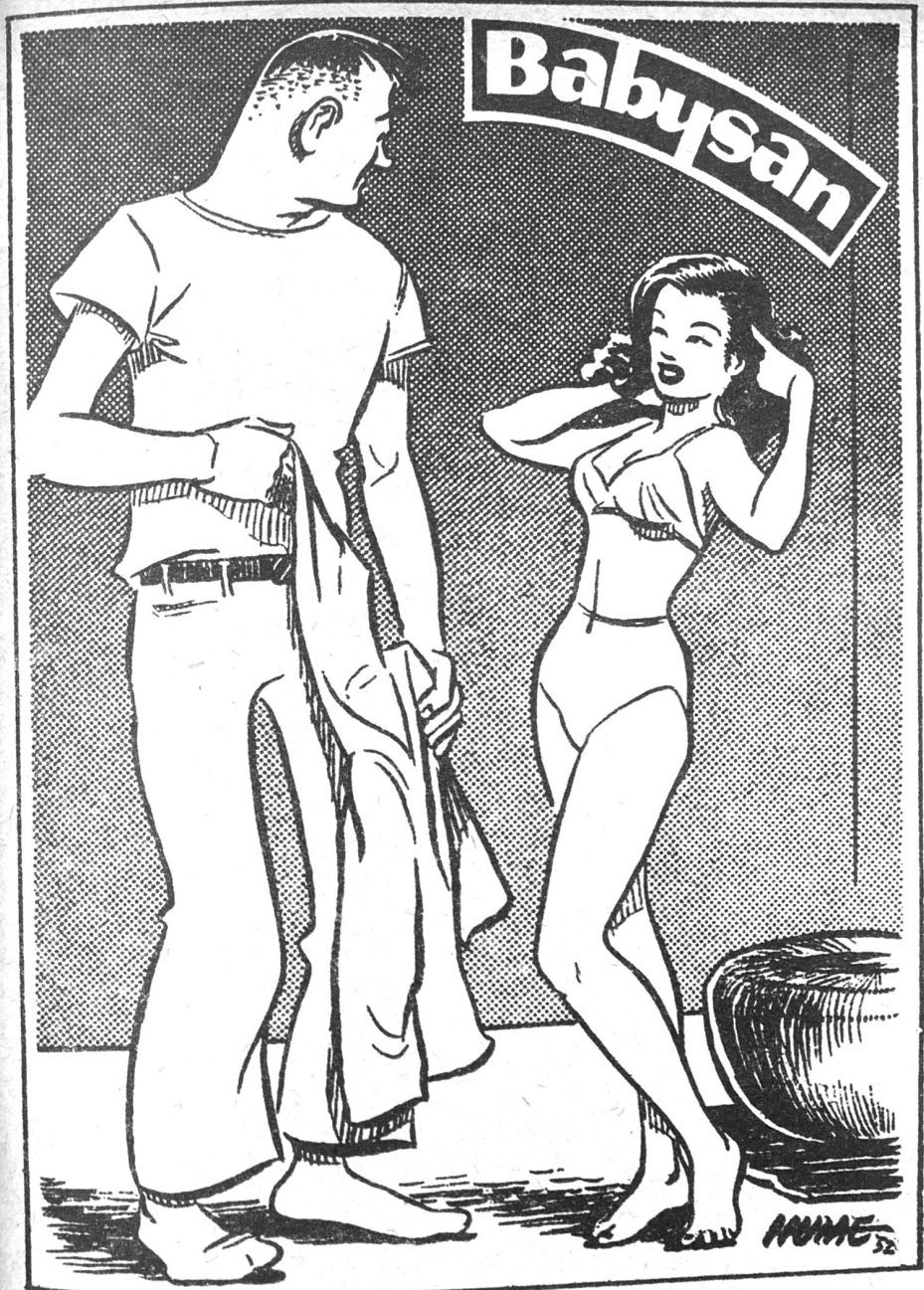


"I think he speak name—Smith-san!"

There's no use trying to put something over on Babysan. She will stop it with a *chotto matte*—just a minute—and let you know she isn't a dumbbelle.

Among the many things she knows is the fact that the navy issues a pass affectionately known as an "overnight." She knows that despite its unfairness to everyone concerned the navy considers it vital and necessary for more than one reason. She has learned to check and make sure her boyfriend hasn't forgotten the important slip of paper and if he doesn't have it he is headed for trouble. Enough trouble at least that he may not be able to come back to see her for an indefinite number of days. That would be a situation less tolerable than some stupid regulation.

Yes, where Babysan is concerned there is never "nobody home upstairs."



"You speak not need overnight pass—you think nobody home upstairs?"

She combines a myriad of attitudes and dispositions. At one moment she is innocent, naive. The next, she is worldly, incredibly intelligent. So interwoven is her incongruous personality that it is hard to tell which moments come when.

She will want to be the *Ichiban*—number one—girl in her boyfriend's life so you may be sure that she will always want to know the score. She may even know it before she is told, but she would like to be reassured.



"Maybe you A.W.O.L. from wife—ne?"

There are many things that the Americans didn't have to teach Babysan. They are characteristics that were always there, and merely brought to the fore by the Occupation. Like the matter of democracy, for instance.

Being democratic is a natural part of Babysan's personality and existence. She knows that it is not the rate or the rank that make the man. She finds him interesting for what he really is. As long as she sticks to the man she has smooth sailing. If she gets a bit mixed up over the intricacies and not-always-logical phases of naval life she can't be blamed. Men who have been in the service for years often make the same mistakes. And theirs can't be blamed on an inability to pronounce a word correctly.

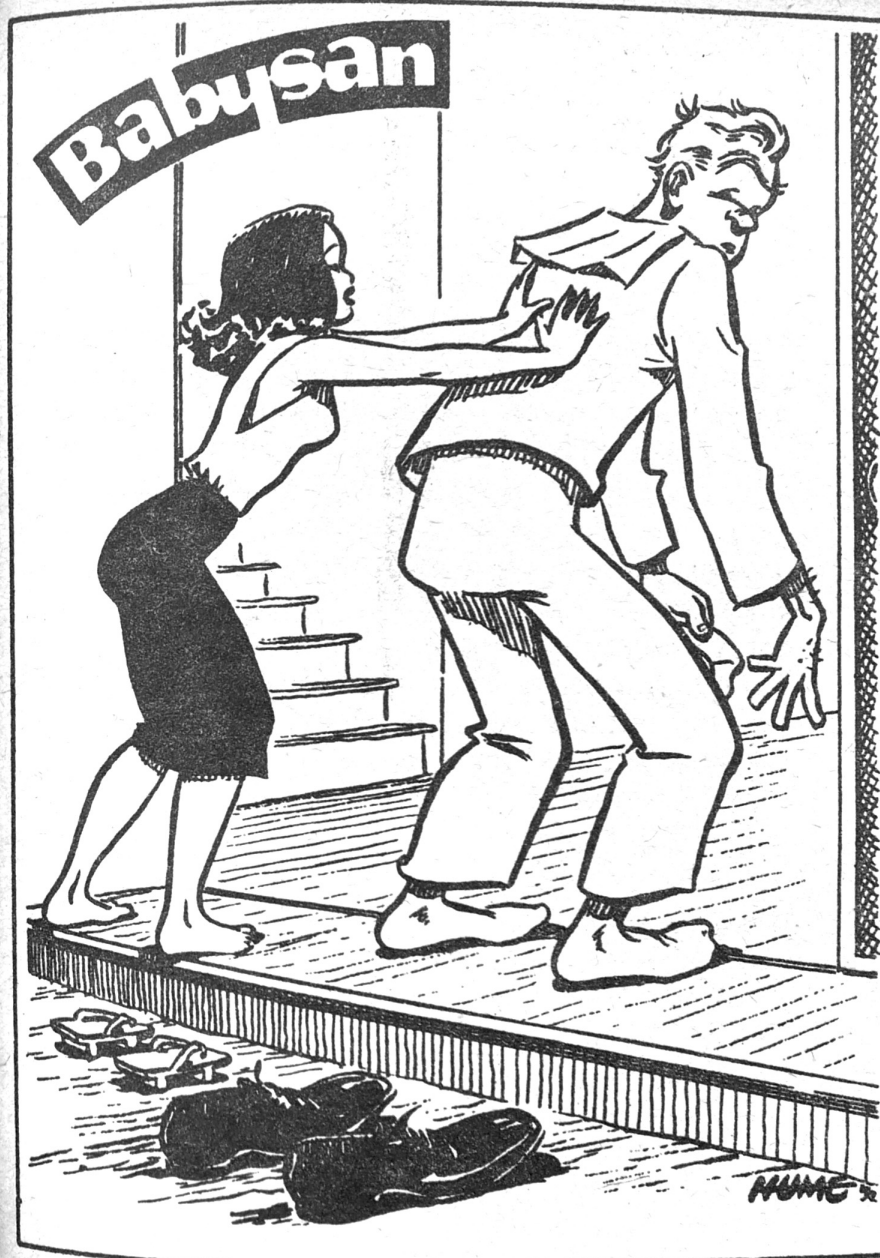


"No, no, Babysan. I said FULL lieutenant—not FOOL lieutenant!"

She may not be aware of it, but, like most Japanese, she possesses a delightful sense of humor.

She can appreciate her boyfriend's concern over his shoes that must be left at the door. Leather shoes have been known to apparently walk away without their owners. They were not stolen, surely, for the Japanese have mild contempt for the tortuous leather bindings used by the Americans. Not only do shoes of this type cramp and distort the foot but they are clumsy and difficult to put on or remove, as opposed to the facility of using the *geta*. Leather shoes are highly impractical on muddy streets and sidewalks unless one wears rubber shoes to protect the leather shoes. Anyway, most American made leather shoes are useless to the Japanese. They're too big!

Extremely big shoes rarely walk away without their owners.



"Dai-jobu—nobody steal **THOSE!**"

Babysan

Babysan has grown up with servicemen around her. She's associated with ship sailors and base sailors. She's listened to their wildest ideas and their bawdiest jokes. She even agrees with some of their private theories. Like the sailor observation that there is some relationship between a sailor's girth and his rate. Babysan doesn't question this. She knows that if a man has been in the navy long enough to make chief he's had time to spread out somewhere. He'll not only get around—but round, as well.



"You get more fat. Soon you can make chief!"

Few girls in the world are cleaner and neater than Babysan and it may take hours to add the little touches that make her especially well groomed. She is an artist with a lipstick brush, painting with a bold stroke and generous with her use of materials. She has various compositions and rarely duplicates a design. She prefers to be "all time different." The boyfriend loves it, of course, but the way he looks at it she is basically fetching and fascinating.

So fascinating, in fact, that additional feminine flourishes often go unnoticed.



"I think you not notice my new locket."

Babysan

Because she is all woman, Babysan likes clothes that have "nice style." The most economical way to get them is to buy yard goods and have a local dressmaker go to work. Babysan carefully goes through the pictures from an American mail-order catalog and selects the illustration that meets her needs. She tells the dressmaker she will take that one, the dressmaker bows with a *domo arigato*—thank you—and two or three days later Babysan can go back and pick up her new dress. The chances are very good that it will fit perfectly and as she wears the new creation it will prompt flattery.

She loves compliments. She does her best to look her best and it's the boyfriend's duty to take note of such things. Seizing the advantage, he does.



"The Japanese sure have nice material!"

At times, however, he goes too far.

Cameras are almost a standard part of the sailor's uniform. Babysan will be coy and shy about having her picture taken—at first—but she loves it. After the ice is broken she will pose in front of a *torii*, or the Ofuna buddha or on a rocky mountain side. Picture excursions are a lot of fun and they are a welcome break in the rather monotonous routine of her life. In bad weather the boyfriend can bring camera and flash gun into the house and he can waste roll after roll of film shooting out-of-focus pictures of Babysan and her friends. Up to a point. Unselfconscious though she may be about the display of her body, Babysan doesn't feel she measures up to a figure model's qualifications and she has no intention of seeing tangible proof.



"Nevah hoppen. No can take no-clothes picture of me!"

She may not object to the boyfriend watching her change clothes. That she can do with an amazing knack of at all times remaining fully dressed. This may not be a skill peculiar to Babysan. American girls could do the same thing but rarely are they limited to one small area that must serve as living room, bedroom, and dressing room. Babysan is. In many ways she is extremely modest and remains that way.

On occasion, she is much like the housewife who does not want her husband peeking into the boiling pot to see what is cooking for supper. They both figure he'll know soon enough.

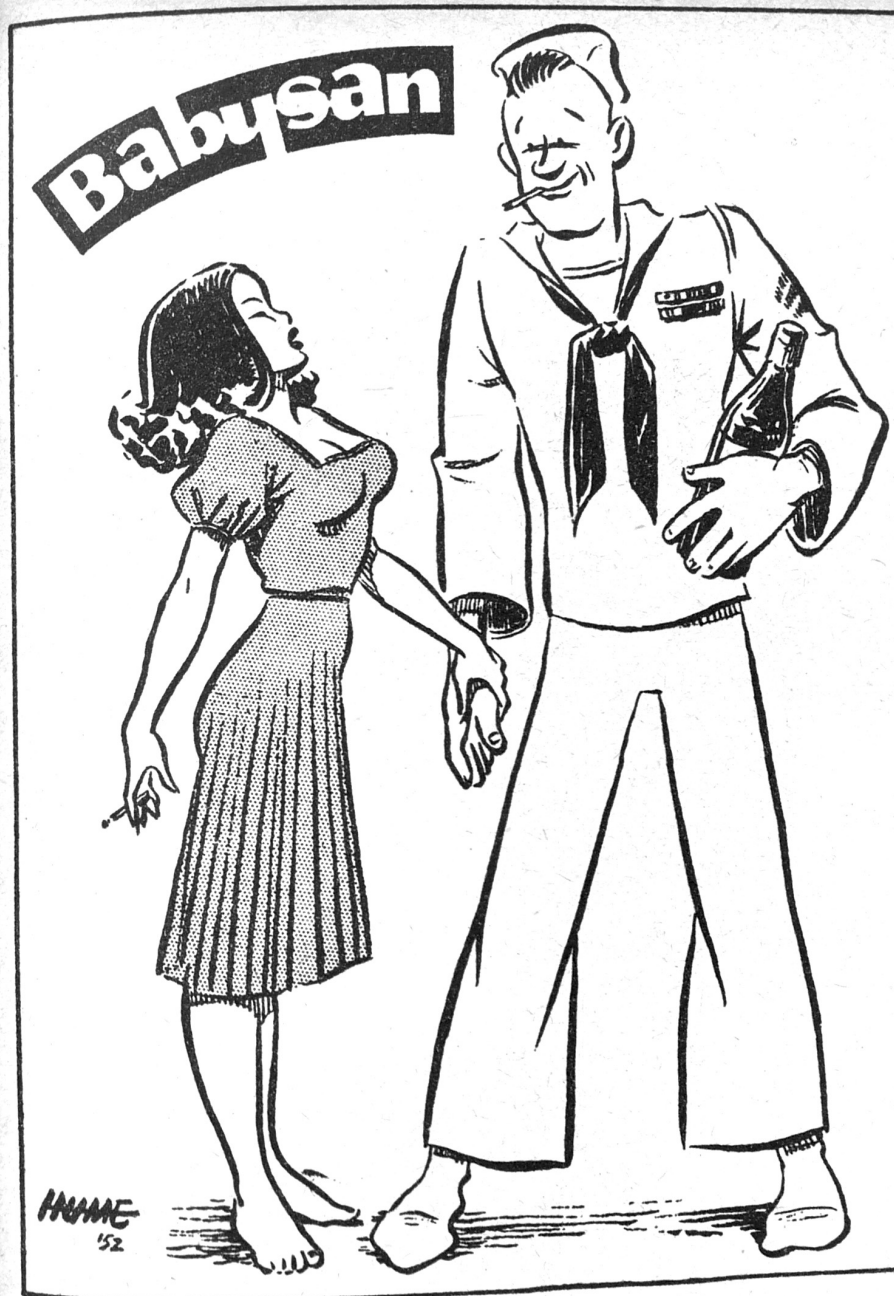


"If you all time look I not undress!"

Babysan

Before the Americans arrived, this Japanese girl would rather cut off her shapely right leg than offend anyone with an impolite statement or tone of voice. Her language contained no way of expressing a direct "yes" or "no." Such frankness would be considered the height of boorishness. Even today she refuses to say "no," although she has now changed until, like the Americans, she can and will say what she thinks.

Now, unlike the rabbit, Babysan does not believe in beating around the bush. When she has something to say, she says it. When something bothers or worries her, she speaks up. She believes in getting it "off her chest."



"Why you speak tonight you going out on a bust?"

Babysan

Dungarees fit to Babysan like jeans fit to the stateside girl. Her slim, firm and rounded, hips are natural for dungarees that the boyfriend keeps around for her use.

She likes them and he likes them—on or off. But of course women wearing trousers are no novelty in Japan. Women often have to do the same work as men, so they also wear the pants.

Babysan's dungarees are worn while she does the household chores or for lounging. Sometimes she has more lounging than she wishes. The boyfriend can have the duty on the most unsatisfactory days.

Babysan is a good business woman and there are specific days—usually twice a month when her boyfriend is a sailor—set aside for the settling of financial indebtedness. She hates to have her schedule upset by his absence. Especially as she suspects that his absence is not navy enforced.

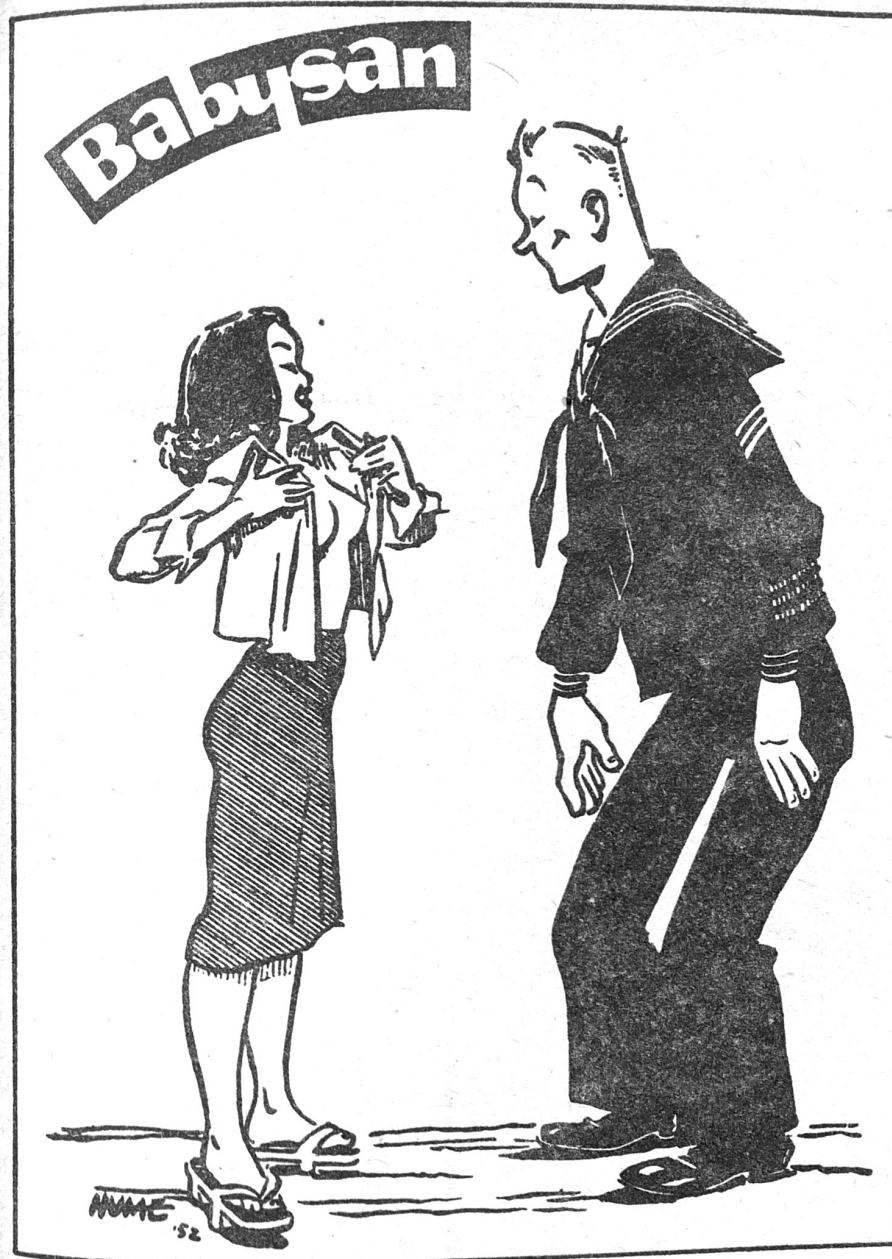


"Why you never have liberty on paydays?"

Babysan

Her neat brown body becomes the object of good-natured kidding by every would-be wit who has just arrived in Japan. He may be a little surprised that Babysan is not in the least offended by his pointed pleasantries, for Babysan is justly proud of her brown skin. If she sees fit to prove that she is brown more or less all over he may be a bit unprepared for such frankness.

He will recover, however, and soon agree with her. It's what is underneath the skin that counts, and he'll quickly proclaim that Babysan is in a class by herself. If he starts comparing qualities for living he may find out that he is the loser.



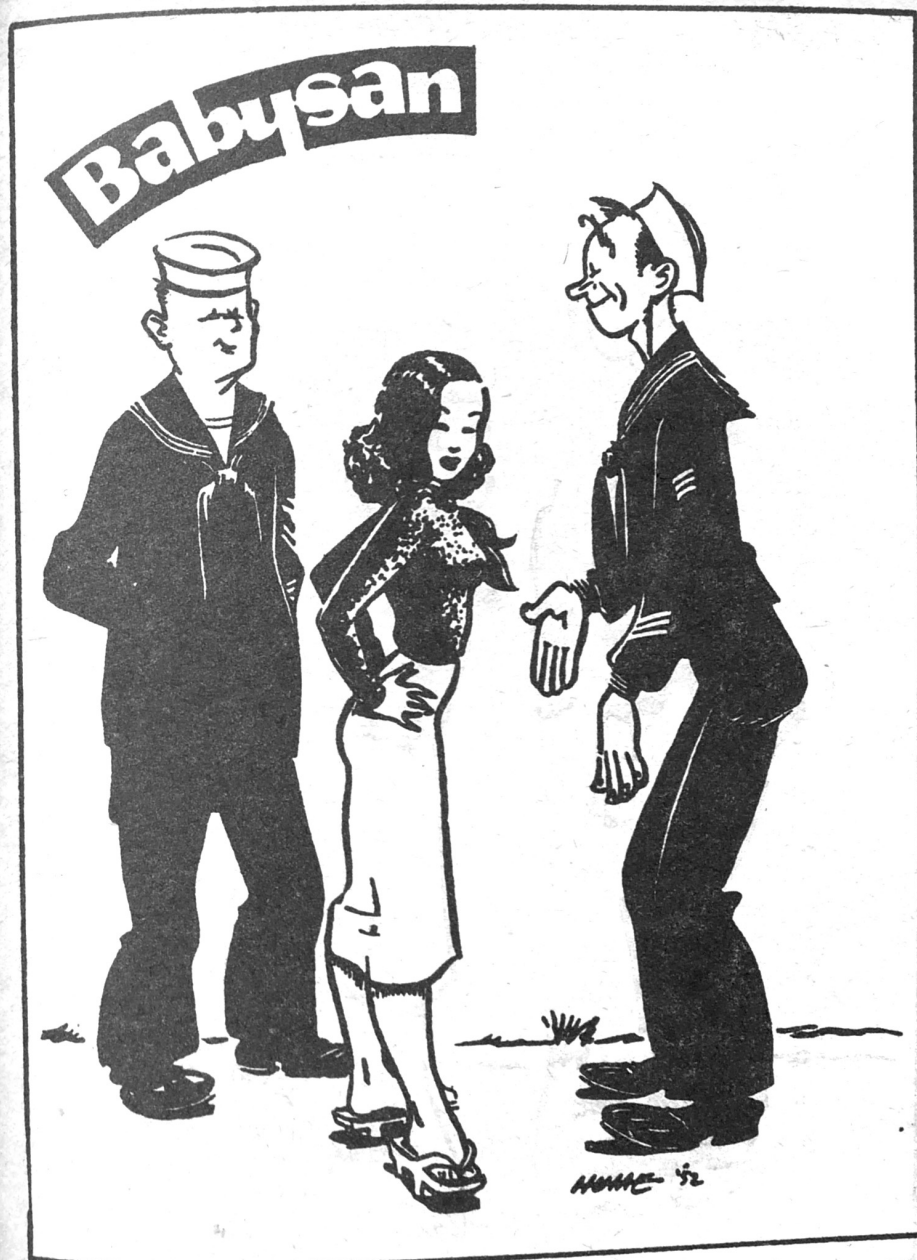
"No—not sunburn—just naturally brown!"

Babysan

Babysan is smart. She may not always seem clever, but she has brains—and uses them. Newcomers to the land of Fuji-san will bluntly state that no girl can outwit them. Such a statement confirms the fact that they are either deluded ignoramuses or that they haven't met Babysan. She will be careful not to appear too brilliant. She may even tell him frankly that she is a little dense, keep her mouth shut, and let him convince himself.

He tries to do her thinking for her, protects her, and makes her happy as any decent naval man would. Everything is just the way she wants it. As he knows her better he discovers that he could be wrong. He may become irritated at this and their first quarrel begins.

When perturbed she attempts to blast her fury in a barrage of English. But invariably she loses her head and speaks—of all things—Japanese.



"She's smart. You oughta hear her speak Japanese!"

Babysan

The Japanese language is a constant challenge to the uniformed Americans. Seemingly it is spoken at breath-taking speed and to the foreigner's ear it sounds wild and chaotic. So does any unfamiliar language. Most servicemen, however, manage to pick up a few shreds of the language, and, with true American confidence, as soon as they manage to mispronounce three or four words of the Japanese language they are sure they know everything there is to know about it. Fortunately, people like Babysan are tolerant of this undeserved feeling of accomplishment and with patience and understanding try to further educate the Americans without being obvious about it. Quite often the Americans are willing and able students of things Japanese, and if they do flunk out in language, politics, and tradition, they pass with flying colors the subjects that they could learn in almost any other country on the globe.



"Of course I can speak your language — I can say
BOTH takusan and sukoshi!"

Babysan

They learn words like *sukoshi* which means "little"; *takusan* which means "much"; *sayonara* which means "goodbye"; and "stinko" which means the same in any language.

Babysan is flattered when her boyfriend can greet her good morning with *ohayo gozaimasu* or beg her pardon with *gomen nasai*. Soon she can ask him the time by merely purring *nanji desuka* or agree with him by smiling *ah so desu*. He will understand. There will be times when they will not need words in any language to understand each other.

There will be times, too, when words cannot express her contempt for his actions. A few drinks may make him extremely good company and full of fun, but as one thing can lead to another, one drink can lead to a drunk.

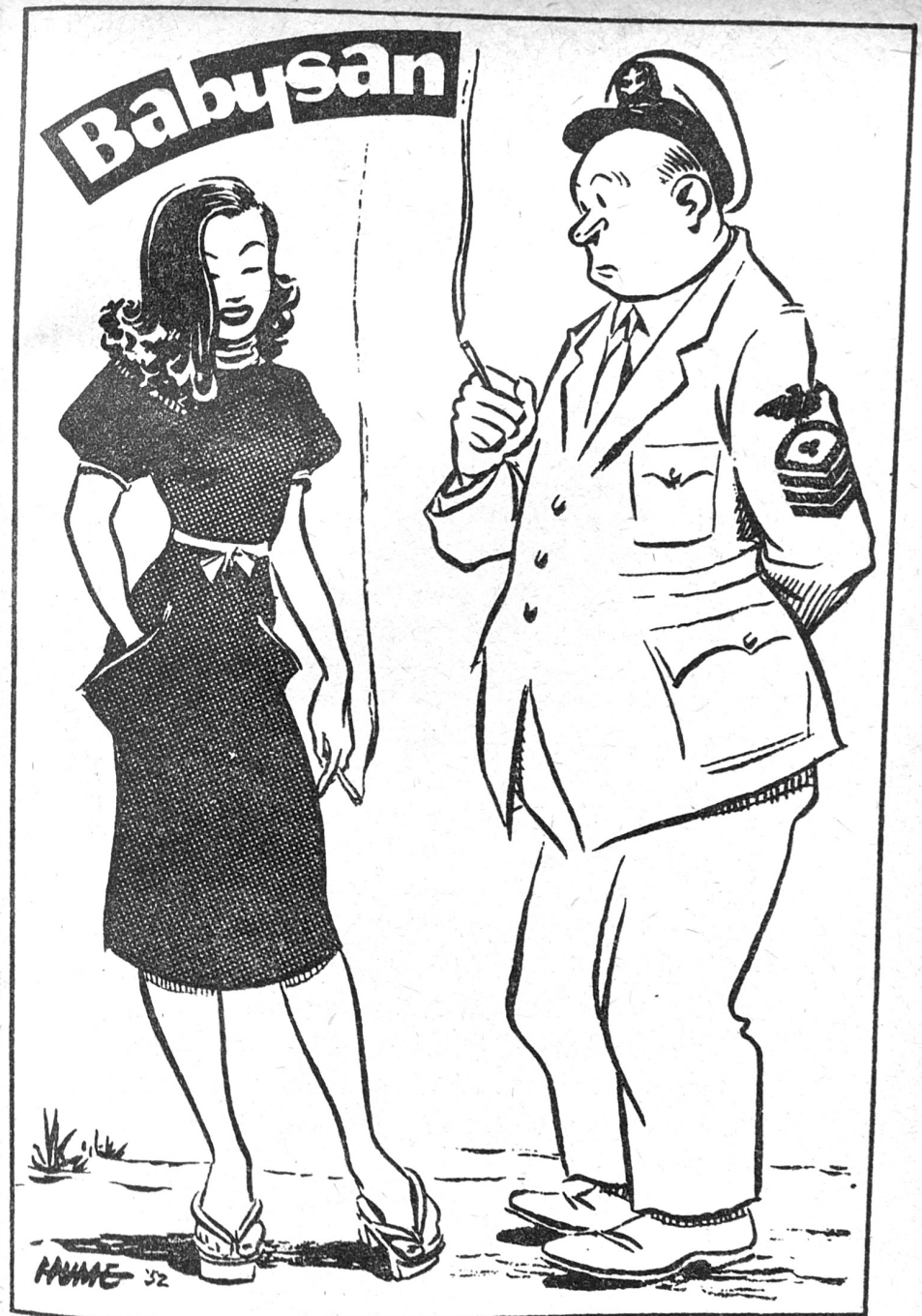


"*Sukoshi stinko, maybe okay—takusan stinko, sayonara!*"

Babysan will not tolerate a drunken boyfriend—nor will she stand for one who is stingy.

She loves to go to the clubs. She does not drink intoxicating beverages for she knows that her race has no affinity for alcohol. So little does so much to them. So drinks are no expense. But she loves to dance, and there are certain foods she likes. This does require that the boyfriend be the temporary possessor of several thousand *yen*. From past experience Babysan has decided that often times the more money a man in uniform makes the less he will spend.

She doesn't expect him to squander his currency foolishly. Japanese women are traditionally the holders of the purse strings, so Babysan knows of many more practical ways of using his *okane*.



"You speak no have money—all chiefs same, same!"

After all, she informs him, she has a family to support.

It is possible that he will never meet her family. They often live in Tokyo while she lives in Yokosuka, and when she decides to live in Tokyo they find it advisable to live in Nagasaki. But she keeps their pictures in a convenient and prominent place among her treasures. She is proud of her family and likes to send them extra gifts whenever she can.

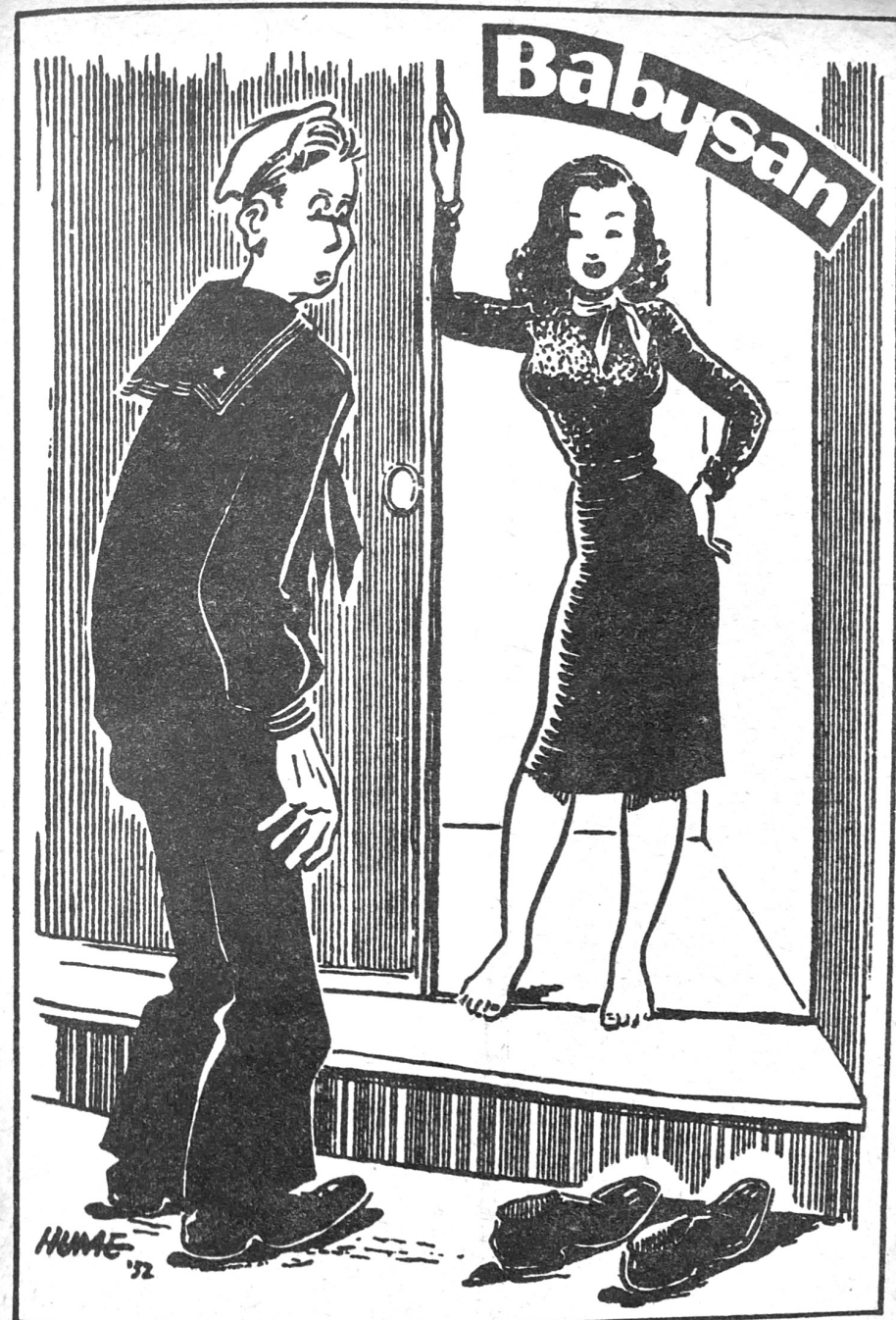
She can write their name and address in Japanese but she has never learned to write the English equivalent. This is most unfortunate, because they must be very interesting folks and the boyfriend would be glad to look them up if he ever happened to be in their part of Japan. But he must be content with listening to the soft tones of reverence as Babysan recounts delightful moments of the good days before the war when she was still with her real *mamasan* and *papasan*.



"Picture my mother, my brother, my sister — have to give money payday!"

Her past possibly is not much different from that of many other girls. Her father was killed in the war, and although she was just a young girl she had to work to help her family. She worked as housemaid for an American army officer—who must have been a real heel, the boyfriend decided—as Babysan related her story—and as a clerk in a department store just a few blocks south of the Tokyo PX. She even learned to “do typewrite” somewhere and he hears of places like Iwakuni, and Atsugi and Nagoya, and a trip to Nikko, and something about the Grand Shima in Yokosuka. She has really been on her own.

Then she tells him more of her family. Her aged mother is bent from toil in rice paddies; her brother wants to be a baseball player when he grows up, but of course he is a sickly child. The tales Babysan tells about members of her family are sometimes hard to believe. It seems uncanny that their body temperatures should rise and fall with Babysan's financial status.



"I have to go to the country today—my mother sick!"

Babysan believes that a man's mate should be able to talk about his work, know something about his business. In this department she does amazingly well.

She and her girl friends, with apparently the help of everyone else in town, have a highly efficient communication system that the Americans call the grapevine. The system not only provides material for light conversation among the girls and gives them a forecast of their economic future, but it is also a necessity for knowing the whereabouts of specific individuals. For instance, it can be most embarrassing not to know Joe-san's ship has returned and that he is now "pitching a liberty" in town the same time as Freddie-san, a base sailor. Both are good friends of Babysan but Joe-san and Freddie-san have never met.

If Babysan can arrange it, they never will.



"Antietam come 15th—Joe-san on Boxer come in 17th
—takusan sailors on number 32"

For all her amazingly accurate knowledge of naval matters, even Babysan slips up when it comes to more or less trivial data. The boyfriend is never sure whether it is lack of information, or whether she is confused. She may be merely having some fun at his expense.

She loves to laugh at his inability to understand her at times. Like she loves to laugh at his struggle with chopsticks or his complete helplessness in manipulating the puzzle-like latch on the outside sliding door.

She loves practical jokes and even out-and-out horseplay. Yes, his new and exciting life with Babysan presents its problems but there is never a dull moment as he tries to sympathize with Japanese customs.



"Missouri state named after ship—ne?"

Babysan is flattered if the boyfriend accepts and adopts her customs. She is especially pleased if he develops a liking for Japanese food. Of course, he has tried *sukiyaki*, and, like most servicemen, loves it. But, despite the fact that she is a fine cook, he never develops a taste for octopus and eels, though he will *tesuto-tesuto*—test, or try—rice, pickled radishes, and fish. For some strange reason, he prefers his fish American style.

The poor boyfriend will not starve, however. Babysan will scurry into the kitchen and prepare a thick, sizzling steak—with a mountain of french fries—for her man. Then she will retire to her bowl of rice and let him enjoy his own strange meal. Despite her constant effort to become westernized she can't understand how anyone can eat such food.



"But it bad luck to serve fish without heads!"

Sleeping on the floor as the Japanese are—uh—prone to do does not win his wholehearted approval. He would much rather sleep on a “stateside” bed. Babysan assures him that he would not be comfortable on a stateside bed. She knows what she is talking about. The Japanese-built, Hollywood-inspired version of a bed as used in the United States isn’t what it is likely to be cracked up to be. There is a certain amount of comfort lacking, and the stateside bed is endowed with the ability to make the most unearthly squeaks and wails at the slightest touch. Another important disadvantage is the fact a stateside bed can cost many thousands of *yen*.

The boyfriend continues to sleep on the floor and in time he agrees with Babysan. There are a great many things that can be said in favor of a Japanese bed.



“But I can sleep better in one of those!”

On occasion, Babysan will shed her western dress for the *Kimono*. Not to be confused with the westernized versions of the costume, there are more parts to the Japanese *kimono* than appear on the surface. The complete outfit can be exquisitely beautiful. It is quite expensive. The boyfriend is startled by this information and is very glad that Babysan is happier with western attire. She keeps her *kimono* put away for special events like New Year's and the more festive days. He is glad of this, too, for putting on the *kimono* is no simple matter, considering the many portions of the outfit and the precise manner in which it must be worn. Graceful and gorgeous though it may be, in summer the *kimono* and its *obi* can be most uncomfortable to Babysan. The *obi* is the long, broad, stiff sash circling the *kimono*. Around the *obi* is tied the ornamental, and useful, *obi-dome*, an intriguing little item in itself. The entire outfit is a curious one—and the boyfriend's curiosity usually gets the best of him.



"No, no. Even if you untie that — kimono still no come off!"

He will find out several curious things about the *kimono*. He will learn that the design of the kimono is responsible for the peculiar toe-in walk associated with Japanese women. There is no other way to walk in a kimono and keep its graceful lines undisturbed. Babysan informs him that the kimono is not a working garment, and he can understand how impractical it is in the busy, constantly crowded streets and railway cars in modern Japan.

The kimono style currently worn by the Japanese came into being about two hundred years ago, and though over half the women now wear western clothes on the street they still seem to prefer the kimono for home wear. Babysan may even demonstrate for him how to put on—and take off—the kimono. Oh, there are many things to learn in Japan.

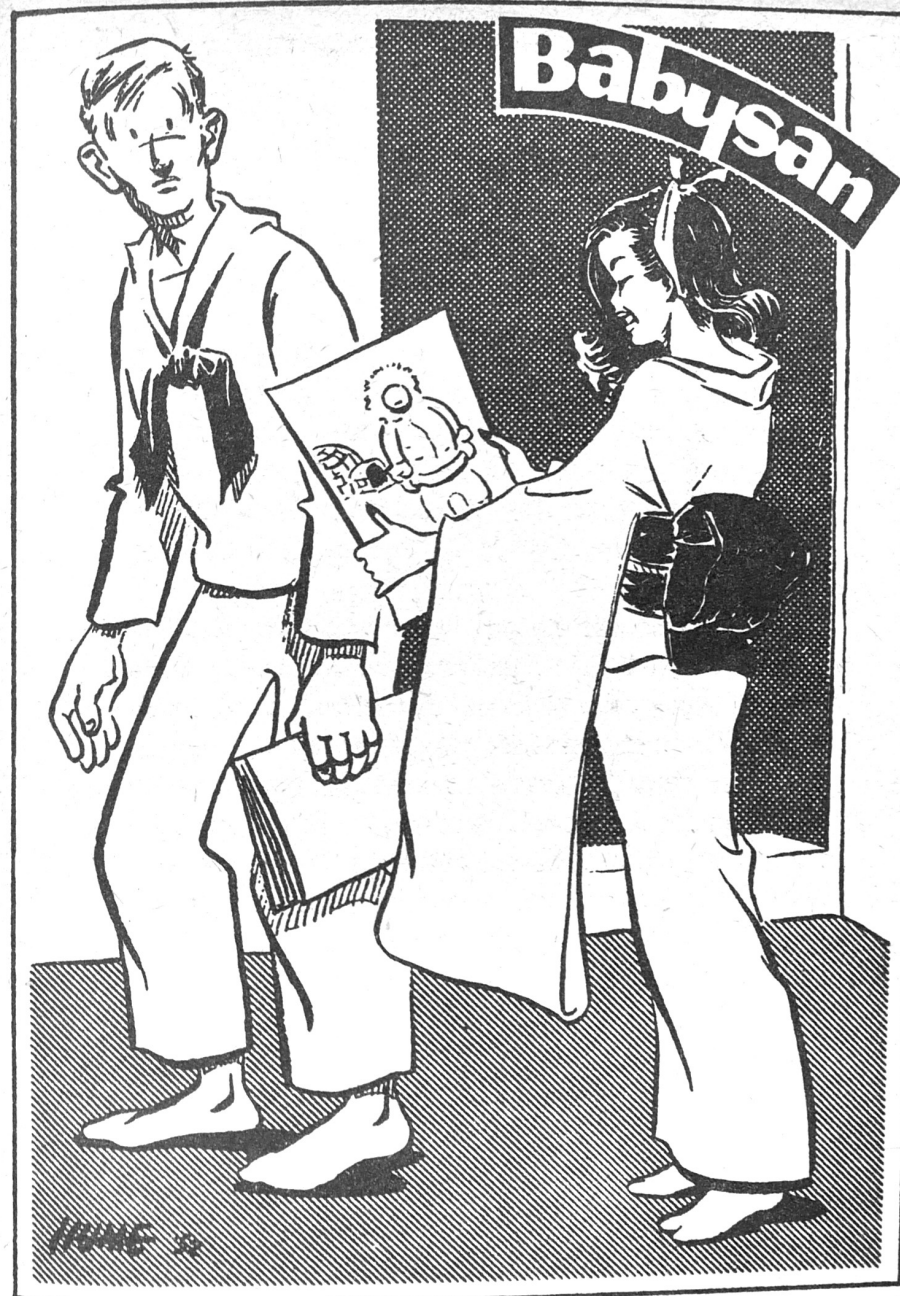


"I've always wondered what they wore underneath a kimono."

Babysan wants the boyfriend to see the sights. She is an excellent interpreter and guide. She takes him to Ueno Park in Tokyo, and to the Club New Yorker; to the Imperial Theatre, and to the Black Rose cabaret; to see the wonderful Japanese movie, "Rashomon," and then to the Cabaret Shangri-La; to see the great bronze Buddha at Kamakura, followed by a visit to that cozy—and costly—night club at the far end of the beach.

She is ever alert to keep him entertained. She likes to accompany him to the American movies at his base theatre. He may get tired of watching low calibre western thrillers, but Babysan will stick with him to see them. In fact, no western movie is dull to Babysan. She loves them.

Yes, fascinating Babysan is fascinated by many things.



"Eskimo have strange clothes—ne?"

When it comes to clothes, Babysan is chic and fashionable, and makes the most of her limited wardrobe. Most of her clothing is "foreign" style but there are still some Japanese items that she retains simply because they are more practical for use in her surroundings.

The Japanese do not wear stockings. They wear a sort of sock known as *tabi*. The *tabi*'s separate division for the big toe permits the comfortable wearing of the *geta*. So in a way it serves as a sock, as an upper portion of a "shoe" and as a house slipper all in one, for it has a heavy cloth or corded sole that is excellent for wear on the matted floors. After the boyfriend has experienced the unpleasantness of walking on a rice mat with his feet protected only by his thin socks he admits that Babysan has the right idea.

Above the *tabi*, the boyfriend soon realizes, the legs are bare.



"How do you like my new *tabi*?"

Babysan's face isn't the "classical," roman-nosed kind found in traditional Japanese art but the boyfriend is convinced that her figure is a neat little number.

She may not have the front upholstery of a Nissho showgirl at the Gekijo Theatre in Tokyo, but she certainly is better than adequate. If she does wear a brassiere it isn't because her firm femininity needs it. It's just another useless article of her adopted occidental apparel. But for sleek curves in the necessary places Babysan's inventory shows a complete stock.

One thing continually bothers Babysan, and constantly she must be reassured that her legs are straight and beautiful. This is a pleasant chore and the boyfriend dutifully checks and rechecks his decision.



"Now you still think I have bow-legs?"

The temperature of the area where Babysan lives at the moment is not too cold. However, with the dampness in the air, it is a penetrating, irritating cold that is guaranteed to make the American uncomfortable. His clothing is not designed for the climate nor does he wear as much clothing as the Japanese in semi-cold-weather. He is subject to uniform regulations, but the Japanese can simply put on more clothing.

The *hibachi* pot, alive with hot charcoals, is the only heater provided in a Japanese room. Even then, the *hibachi* is used more to warm the hands than the room itself. The houses have no stoves or fireplaces, for the Japanese are not especially concerned with heating their rooms.

Perhaps the best way to warm up and be comfortable is by indulging in the Japanese equivalent of that delightful American custom—bundling.



"But, Babysan—it's too cold to play—cards!"

The *hibachi* is the traditional spot for a cozy get-together. Friends or home members will gather around the pot, warm their hands, and discuss the latest happenings. At these gatherings—except for a few choice statements from Babysan—the boyfriend is usually left out in the conversational cold.

He can never be sure whether he is the subject of the moment or not. Sometimes he is sure. Apparently Babysan assumes that he understands every little inflection as they breeze along in their native tongue. She knows he understands the little *ne* or *desho* that punctuates every phrase and sentence and to make sure he is still listening she will turn to him with a direct question relative to the conversation.

If he admits that Japanese is all Greek to him, she has a stock answer.

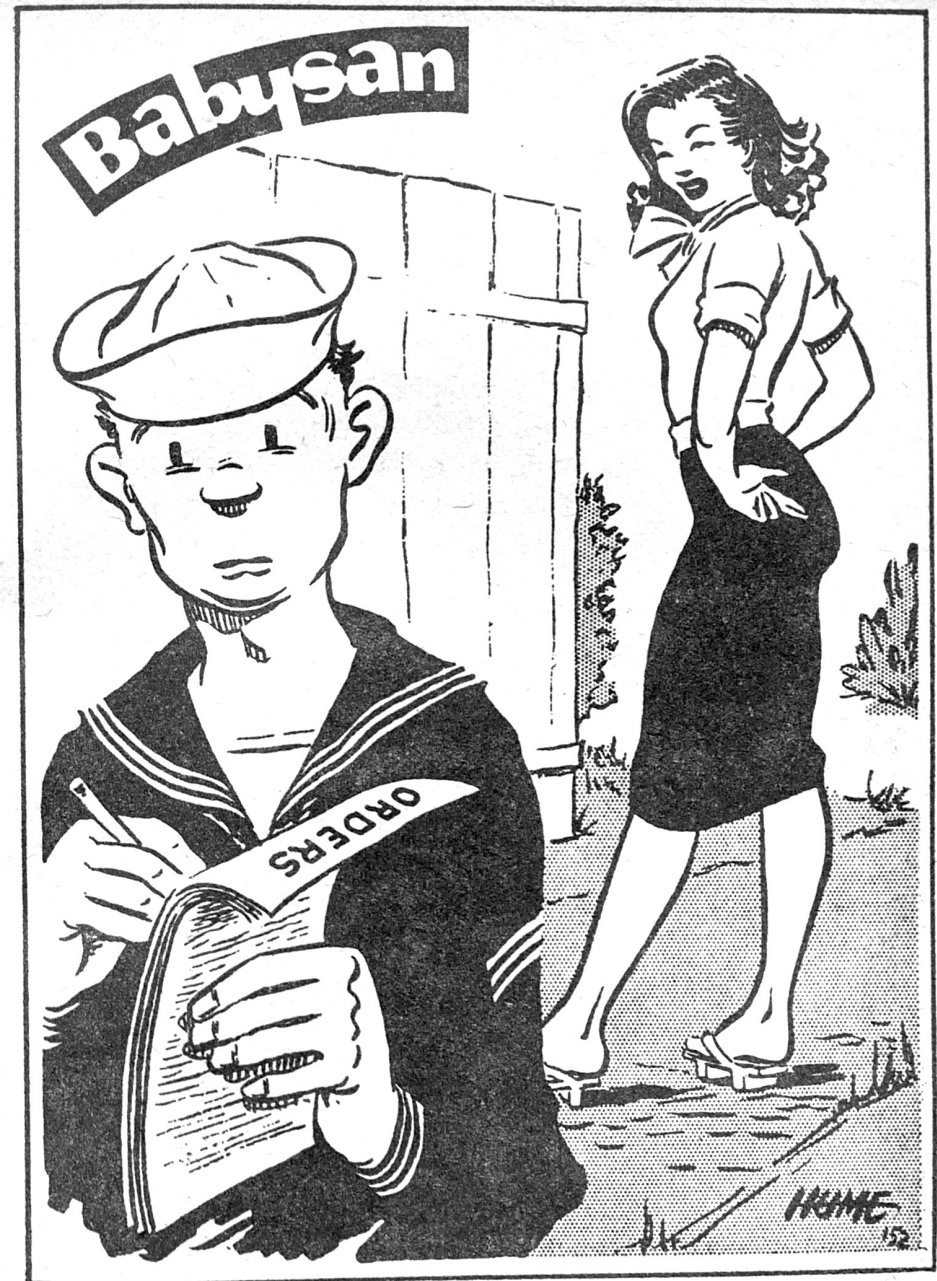


"You don't know, do you?"

Because of the warm and gracious hospitality of the Japanese people, because of the pleasant peculiarities of the country, because he has found an attitude toward life that brings a serenity unmolested by the vicious hubbub of western ambition, and because of Babysan, he does not find it easy to leave.

He will never see her again but he will never forget her. He taught her much but she taught him more. His education ceases but hers will continue. She brought him a happiness—spiced with an occasional heart-ache—he had never known before, a happiness that in some ways he never knew could exist. Soon it will be over and for the rest of his life it will seem like a fantastic dream. But it did happen. He is glad it did.

All good things must come to an end. The boyfriend's association with Babysan is no exception. The end is in sight.



"I hate to go and leave all that behind!"

Babysan

When his ship pulls out the boyfriend's thoughts are with Babysan. He wonders how she will manage without him. He wonders if she feels the same sense of loss. Sure, he remembers her soothing words as she smiled up through a trace of tears, "I all time remember," but he wonders. He wonders if she too is lonely.

Since his ship is far, far away from the dock, he wonders. He never knows.



Glossary

A partial list of words that Babysan and her boy-friends use. Some are Japanese, some are English, some are both, and some are neither. Spellings of the Japanese are given in Romanized (Hepburn) form as well as in a free phonetic form for easier pronunciation. This is for the benefit of those who never had Babysan for a teacher.

Arigato—(ah ree gah toh)—Thank you.

A so desu—(ah so dess)—That is so; that's right.

A so desuka—(ah so desskah)—Is that so? The *ka* shows that it is a question.

Butterfly—English, meaning to flit from romance to romance even when one has a "steady" love interest.

Chichi—(chee chee)—Jane Russell has 'em, Marie Wilson has 'em . . .

Chisai—(chee sah ee)—Small. In many cases this is most unfortunate.

Chotto matte—(cho toh mah teh)—Just a minute.

Dai jobu—(di joh bee)—Okay.

Dame—(dah mee)—All wrong; no good; lousy.

Desho—(deh show)—I suppose, I guess, maybe, I expect.

Domo arigato—(doh moh ah ree gah toh)—Thank you very much.

Eat money—It's the *yen* that buys the chow.

Fuji—(foo jee)—Japan's world-famous sacred mountain, often called Fujiyama by the Americans, or by the Japanese, Fuji-san.

Geisha—(gay shah)—A professional female entertainer schooled from childhood in the social graces and fine arts.

Geta—(gay tah)—Wooden clogs, one of several types of footwear used by the Japanese.

Gohan—(goh hahn)—Although literally meaning boiled rice, the word serves for meals.

Gomen nasai—(goh man nah sah ee)—Pardon me; I beg your pardon.

Hibachi—(hee bah chee)—A charcoal burner, usually referred to by servicemen as the "hibachi pot."

House—English, but to Babysan it can also mean "home." Her best way of expressing "home" is "real mamasan's house."

Ichiban (ee chee bahn)—The best; the most, or literally, number one.

Katakana—(kah tah kah nah)—The simplest or more formal of Japanese "alphabets" of syllabic sound.

Kimono—(kee moh noh)—Clothes, very generally speaking.

Konban wa—(kohn bahn wah)—Good evening. A greeting, never as a farewell.

Konnichi wa—(koh nee chee wah)—Good afternoon.

Kudasai—(koo dah sah ee)—Give me.

Mamasan—(mah mah sahn)—Mother; lady of the house, or an elderly lady.

Nanji desuka—(nahn gee dess kah)—What time is it?

Ne—(neh)—Undoubtedly the most overworked word in conversational Japanese. Means—Isn't that right; see what I mean, etc. Seemingly it is used after every statement, either for emphasis or to keep the listener awake.

Nevah hoppen—It will never happen. Want to bet?

Never hatchee—Sailor-English meaning the same as above.

Nobody home upstairs—English slang meaning dumbness or no brains.

Obi—(oh bee)—The broad waistband of the traditional feminine kimono attire.

Ohayo gozaimasu—(oh hah yoh gohz eye mahs)—Good morning. Often shortened to just "Ohio."

Okane—(oh kah neh)—Money, brother, and you'll need it!

Papasan—(pah pah sahn)—The landlord, the old man, or a married sailor with kids.

Presento—(pre sent oh)—With or without the "o" it means a gift.

Sailor—A victim of a recruiting officer's sales talk.

Sake—(sah keh)—Wine, a beverage of intoxicating delight.

Samui—(sah moo ee)—Cold.

San—(sahn)—A suffix that literally seems to mean honorable, it is a title of respect comparable to our Miss, Missus, Mister, or Master.

Sayonara—(Usually slurred to sah ah nah dah)—Good-bye, or good night. A farewell greeting. Also used to mean "gone." For instance, "he speak sayonara (is gone)."

Shook—Slang for angry or irritated.

Soroban—A calculating device, speedy and efficient in the hands of the Japanese. Sometimes the Americans, not the Japanese, erroneously call it an abacus because of its similarity to the ancient Greek calculator.

Speak—English, serving to mean tell me, told me, will tell me; say, said, will say, are saying; like "what does newspaper speak?" or "you speak (tell) your friend . . ." or "what (did) your friend speak (say)?"

Speak friend—A non-romantic acquaintance.

Sukiyaki—(skee yak kee)—Thinly sliced beef a la Japonaise, and it's good!

Sukoshi—(sko shee)—A little. Refers to amount, not size.

Swabbie—A sailor.

Tabi—(tah bee)—Sock or socks (Japanese use no plurals) with the divided toe.

Takusan—(tock sahn)—Many or much, or a large amount.

Tatami—(tah tah mee)—A mat or matting. A woven rice-straw floor covering.

Tesuto—(tess toh)—Testo, testo, is the signal to test or try something. A slight corruption of the English word taken into the Japanese language years ago.

Torii—(toh ree)—The gateway to Shinto shrines.

Yen—It can be Japanese money or an urge. It's nice to have both!

Babysan

and

Books

"Tonight you like curl up with good book?" asks Babysan... Well, here're some she could recommend:

When We Get Back Home by Bill Hume — Another hilarious book of cartoons by the author of Babysan. The perils of Stateside life for those who've known Babysan too long. ¥ 360 (mailing ¥ 40)

Tokyo Shopping & Sightseeing Guide by Pat Beson — What to do, where to go, and how to have fun when you get to Tokyo. With this guide you can make every minute count. ¥ 270 (mailing ¥ 30)

Japan Past & Present by Edwin O. Reischauer — A short, fascinating and most readable history by an outstanding authority, Prof. Reischauer of Harvard. A "must" for those who want to know more about the people and the country. ¥ 540 (mailing ¥ 60)

Hibachi Cookery in the American Manner by George Engler — Recipes for all your favorite American dishes to be cooked on a Japanese stove, given in both English and Japanese. ¥ 1000 (mailing ¥ 100)

Bartender's Guide to the Best Mixed Drinks — Recipes for 220 favorite drinks given in both languages. ¥ 360 (mailing ¥ 40)

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BABYSAN

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● The antics of the fun-loving Babysan, many of which are recorded on the 128 pages of this book, are fast becoming a well-loved legend in the history of the GI Dynasty in Japan.

● Babysan is not a travel-bureau impression, nor is she to be found in movie travelogues. She is a phase of Japanese-American life hitherto untouched—a phase that will keep the reader roaring with laughter. (For added amusement, don't miss Babysan's Glossary of broken American and disjointed Japanese—page 124.) She is a symbol of the Japanese impact on young Americans who suddenly find themselves surrounded by oriental culture.

● To anyone who has ever served with the Allied Forces in Japan this book will bring many a chuckle in recalling Babysan's antics. To others, this book will prove a fascinating account of one neglected aspect of the servicemen's varied and amusing social life in the Far East. To Americans everywhere the significant first book by the talented Bill Hume will be, in the words of the *Navy Times (Pacific)*, "sure-fire cartoon entertainment!"

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